

# Foreign Visits and Assignments

Or

*What to do while waiting for your visa...*

Developments since our last meeting:

1. Three ORNL scientists traveled to Canada and were “red-flagged” for security.
2. U.S. Embassy in China announces new VISA application procedures for Chinese citizens.
3. State Dept and Homeland Security report “streamlining” of visa approval procedure.
4. AIP along with 25 science, engineering and educational organizations call for the DOS to revise visa policy.

# ORNL scientists story

Sunday, 9 May 2004

## When science, security collide

Post-9-11 protectiveness puts the squeeze on ORNL and other research institutes

BY FRANK MUNGER  
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**OAK RIDGE** — Julian Velez is 31 and single. His young career is teeming with promise.

He has a joint research appointment at Oak Ridge National Laboratory and the University of Alabama's Center for Materials for Information Technology. His work in nanomagnetism may help improve computer hard drives.

For the past six weeks, however, the Bulgarian physicist has been stuck in Canada, his life on hold, his frustration growing.

He and two other foreign nationals from ORNL — Feng Ye of China and Seok Il Yun of South Korea — were red-flagged for security reviews while attending a physics conference in Montreal. Their research interests were on a list of sensitive technologies monitored by the U.S. State Department.

The U.S. consulate notified Velez earlier this week that his visa had been approved, allowing him to re-enter the United States. He is expected back in Oak Ridge today.

He is happy that his saga is coming to an end. But he doesn't understand why he was targeted or

### PROBLEM AT THE CANADIAN BORDER

Foreign scientists stalled on return to Oak Ridge



**JULIAN VELEV**

**Age:** 31

**Citizenship:** Bulgaria

**Job:** Theoretical physicist

**Education:** Ph.D., University of Illinois

**Status:** Expected to return today



**FENG YE**

# **INFORMATION ALERT UPDATE: 25 May 2004 U.S. EMBASSY IN CHINA ANNOUNCES NEW U.S. VISA APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR CHINESE CITIZENS**

The U.S. Embassy and Consulates General in China have issued new interim Visa application procedures for Chinese citizens planning to travel to the United States. In light of the fact that the all-china Visa Information/Appointment Call Center for United States Visas remains closed on the order of the Chinese authorities, reference DOECAST dated May 25, 2004, the U.S. Embassy and Consulates General have announced new application procedures in an effort to maintain customer service to the extent possible.

**US Embassy Reopened for visa applications 4 June 2004.**

# Note from Ed Ramotowski, DOS

...The Mantis process is under continuous review at high levels of the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security, and the law enforcement and intelligence agency communities with a view toward making it a more effective and efficient process. While more than 80 percent of the Mantis clearances are completed in less than 30 days, others take longer because of the complexity of the case. We are working on additional ways to reduce the number of these delays...

The trend on clearance times continues to be positive, and we will keep you posted on new developments....

# Leading Science, Higher-Education and Engineering Groups Urge Six Improvements to U.S. Visa- Processing Quagmire

9 June 2004

More than 20 science, higher-education and engineering groups, representing some 95 percent of the U.S. research community, today urged the federal government to adopt six practical recommendations for solving the current visa-processing crisis, by removing unnecessary barriers to multinational discoveries.